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SUBJECT: U.S.-BRAZIL CAE - NEXT STEPS

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¶1. At the December 13, 2006, U.S.-Brazil Common Agenda for the Environment (CAE) it was agreed that a Technical Work Group be created under the CAE framework to review and coordinate technical-level cooperation. This work group could meet at any time but would report its work and seek policy guidance from CAE principals. This format would allow bilateral technical efforts to move forward within the ambit of CAE political considerations, but without hindering progress on the ground. Minister Luiz Figueiredo, Chief of the Environment Division of Itamaraty and head of the Brazilian delegation at the CAE suggested the first meeting be held in early 2007.

¶2. Post is ready to approach the Brazilians to get started on the formation of this group. Our thinking is that initially and small core group (3-4) from each side could meet to launch, bringing in others down the road where needed. Since the role of this committee is to review proposals for bilateral cooperation, proposed projects could be circulated electronically for comment.

¶3. In light of limited travel resources, Post suggests that the first meeting of the Technical Work Group be virtual, utilizing the U.S. Embassy Brasilia Digital Video Conference (DVC) facilities linked to the Bureau in Washington. With Department concurrence, Post would like to propose to the Brazilians that the first (virtual) meeting of the Technical Work Group take place the beginning of March.

¶4. Post will need to present to the Technical Work Group a summary of proposed bilateral collaborations for their review. In preparation, Post is working with Brazil's Ministry of the Environment (MMA) to flesh out further detail of their original requests for technical assistance, initially outlined in Reftel (a). Of the five areas listed, we have chosen three. We are preparing two-page briefs with additional specifics relating to the requests for technical assistance on water, the establishment and management of parks and chemicals.

¶5. In our communications with the Ministry, we reiterate that we are developing an outline for technical assistance without the commitment of funds to support these activities. Once a framework is developed, however, sources of funding may become available from a variety of entities, including the Brazilians themselves.

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